



TREE

Three Rivers
Environmental
Educators

Branching Out

February 13 2009

Notice the new title---by unanimous vote! Thank you to everyone that voted. I hope you do "branch out" into the activities, training, and increased knowledge available through these links.

TREE meetings:

Next meeting April 21, 11 am, at beautiful Stratford Hall, 483 Great House Road, Montross VA. We will get a special tour of the mansion, and have a chance to walk the nature trails or go down to find shark's teeth on the fossil beach. Visit their website at www.stratfordhall.org

TREE member Wanda Atkins would like to organize a **field trip to the Najemoycreek Educational Center in Charles County, MD**. The public school system integrates environmental education into the school system via MD Standards of Learning at each grade level, including an overnight camp experience for all 5th graders. Contact Wanda at atkinsatty@msn.com

Local Events:

February 19: Belle Isle State Park will be the site for a Naked Tree Walk from 10:00 am to noon. Rich Steensma of the Virginia Department of Forestry will lead the walk. During the walk, participants will learn how to use branch patterns, bark texture, and other methods to identify trees. Winter provides a wonderful time to learn about trees as their true forms are more evident when they are "naked", or without their leaves. The program will be outside, so please dress for the weather.

February 19: "Retaining Water is Good for the Bay – Stormwater Management for Homeowners"

Samuel Johnson will lead an engaging talk about stormwater management. Having adequate amounts of rainfall is essential to growing good farm crops, having good home vegetable gardens and keeping a nice green lawn. Excess runoff can cause major erosion of soils and carry with it numbers of pollutants as it moves across the topography. Nature knows how to handle large quantities of rainfall in natural settings of forests, grasslands, wetlands, etc by slowing the water velocity and allowing it to infiltrate the soil. When the "natural hydrology" of a land surface with houses, roads, parking lots, shopping centers and other surfaces are changed, the way that water moves across and in the soil is also changed. Impervious surface allows more water to accumulate in one spot and usually sends it moving faster. Rainfall also has the opportunity to pick up numerous water pollutants as it moves across harder surfaces such as oil, sediment, and pesticides. There are large and small scale options/practices to reduce rainfall runoff and attempt to get back to the natural hydrology that use to exist on any site. Reducing impervious surfaces, rain barrels, rain gardens, grass swales, and porous pavements are just a few examples. Reducing rainfall runoff can add to the body of work going into Chesapeake Bay restoration.

Johnson is the Non-Point Source Specialist with the Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District. He holds a B.S. and M.S. in Agricultural Economics from Virginia Tech and spent 31 years as the Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, Crop & Soil Science, in Westmoreland County. He currently serves with the Northern Neck Soil and Water District in Warsaw assisting with the Virginia BMP Cost Share Program and promoting conservation practices with Northern Neck localities.

All of the programs are free and meet at the Visitor Center. There is a \$2 per car parking fee.

Grow Local, Buy Local, Eat Local—Food for Thought

The Northern Neck Master Gardeners will present their annual Gardening the Northern Neck seminar on Saturday, March 21, 9 am to 3:30 pm at the Church of the Nazarene in White Stone. Morning and afternoon keynote speakers, breakout sessions, panel discussions, and a market place are planned. For more information and registration details call the Northumberland Extension office at (804) 580-5694 or e-mail kingdon@kaballero.com

Other Events:

Due to inclement weather, the February **Virginia Project Learning Tree Facilitator Training** is postponed until May 20-21. It will still take place at the New Kent Forestry Center near Providence Forge, Virginia. The prerequisite is participation in a PLT PreK-8 Workshop prior to the Facilitator Training. Current workshops are posted on the Calendar of Events at www.plt.org. Participants are also expected to co-lead a PLT workshop within 18 months of completing Facilitator Training. For registration information contact lisa.deaton@dof.virginia.gov

2009 Virginia MAMEA Mini-Conference

February 28th, 8:30am-4pm, Virginia Aquarium

Join us for a day of discussion, hands-on activity, and outdoor exploration as we share strategies for getting conservation into the classroom curriculum.

For more information - [click here](#)

VAM Conference 2009: It's a Natural!

March 21st-24th, The Founder's Inn, Virginia Beach

What could be more Natural than building your professional career by adding new skills and increasing your knowledge of trends in the industry? Attend the VAM (Virginia Association of Museums) and do what comes Naturally - reach out and connect with professional contacts in the Virginia and DC museum community. ***For more information - [click here](#)***

Join Chesapeake Experience for an evening out at the Mariner's Museum in Newport News:

Wednesday, March 4 • 6:30 P.M.
Jane Kirkland

Author of the *Take a Walk*
Children's Series

Join Jane Kirkland, author of the renowned *Take a Walk* children's series, as she discusses her newest book, *Take A Wetlands Walk*, a guide to the fascinating world of the North American wetlands and the tadpoles, waterfowl, and various other plants and animals who take up residence there. Ms. Kirkland's books, which encourage kids to get outdoors and experience nature, have won numerous awards from both parent's and educator's groups. She has been featured on *Animal Planet*, interviewed on NPR, and quoted in numerous magazines such as *Parents*, *Family Circle*, *Parenting*, and *Redbook*.

Representatives from the following groups and organizations will be on hand before and after the lecture to discuss environmental topics:

- Be the Bay • Booker T. Washington Middle School
- Nauticus • The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail
- The Mariners' Museum • The Virginia Institute of Marine Science and Chesapeake Experience

*Cost is \$2 per person, \$10 for families of 5 or more • Doors open at 6 P.M.
Lecture begins at 6:30 P.M. with a book-signing to follow (books will be available for sale)*

For more information, please contact us at 757-890-0502 or jill@ChesapeakeExperience.org

*EVENT SPONSORED BY MARINER'S MUSEUM, BOOKER T. WASHINGTON MS MAGNET
AND CHESAPEAKE EXPERIENCE*

NCLI: Restoring Nature to Early Childhood

April 28th-29th, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond

With the publication in 2005 of Richard Louv's provocative book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, a national dialogue among educators, parents, land use planners, architects and landscape designers, health professionals and conservationists has examined the critical relationship between direct exposure to nature and healthy childhood development. This symposium propels the dialogue forward: developmental psychologists will help us understand the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and creative assets that young children gain through outdoor experiences, while design professionals and public policy shapers will share how direct, authentic experiences in nature can be created for children wherever they live, play, and learn.

For more information - [click here](#)

Free Tools and other Cool Stuff

The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) [Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives](#) (CFBCI) offers regularly updated documents available on the [CFBCI Web site](#).

[Savvy PR for Nonprofits](#)

This four-part series, written by Susan Young, an award-winning news and PR entrepreneur with

experience in both the government and nonprofit sectors, will help readers increase their organizations' name recognition, visibility, credibility, and revenues. The series will explore the value of and difference between public relations and advertising, and subsequently offer tips for writing effective press releases, speaking to reporters and pitching stories, and mapping out a proactive PR plan for 2009. To read Part Four, "Developing a 2009 PR Strategy," click the title above.

New Invasive Species Guidebook Available:

Developed by the Wildlife Habitat Council, it is available for free download at <http://www.wildlifehc.org/ewebeditpro/items/O57F20712.pdf> Originally devised as a tool for land managers at Department of Defense installations, the guidebook is applicable to management of any natural area. The book's first section focuses on identification and management of specific invasive plants that occur in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Later chapters contain information about invasive species removal and habitat restoration techniques, including discussion of how to minimize impacts on native wildlife while controlling invasive species, how to prevent recurring invasions, how to restore native habitat, and how to use partnerships to achieve goals.

[Note: I downloaded this. It is over 175 pages, so don't open if you have dial-up. The first 125 pages are pictures, descriptions, and controls of invasive plants. I didn't know there were so many! I couldn't link to the above, but went to www.wildlifehc.org and scrolled to the bottom of the page where I found the link.]

Think You Can't Make a Difference?

The following video clip is a story of Johnny, the grocery store bagger. It is very short, but it will remind you of why and how we make an impact in what we do. It's amazing how one young bagger with Down's Syndrome made such a wonderful impact on those customers lucky enough to have Johnny bag their groceries! <http://www.stservicemovie.com/>

[Note: I debated whether to add this because it is not environmental education based. But we are all in the customer service business, and besides, it brought a tear to my eye.]

Grants, Volunteers, and Funding:

Is Your Organization Right for AmeriCorps?

The Virginia Department of Social Services' Office on Volunteerism and Community Service is accepting applications for AmeriCorps program funding. AmeriCorps is a national service network that provides part-and full-time service opportunities for participants to serve their communities. These members build the capacity of nonprofits to meet local environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. Organizations interested in learning more about AmeriCorps and becoming a sponsoring organization can review [informative presentations and take an online assessment](#) to find out if they are eligible. An optional [pre-proposal conference](#) for potential candidates will be held in Richmond on Feb. 11. **The deadline for sealed proposals is 5pm, March 12, 2009.**

Serve America Act is Introduced

Senators Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) have introduced the "Serve America Act," a bill to expand national and community service opportunities for all Americans. The goal of the legislation is to encourage 175,000 more Americans to give a year of service to address specific national challenges such as strengthening our schools or increasing economic opportunities. [Find out more.](#)

Children's Theatre Foundation of America

The Children's Theatre Foundation of America's grantmaking focus is on theatre for children and youth, the utilization of drama/theatre in education for children grades K-12, and development opportunities for theatre artists working in the area of children's theatre in the United States. The Founders Grant Program supports diverse projects of national significance, including national and international theatre festivals and research in theatre education and practice. The Aurand Harris Children's Theater Grants Program supports small and mid-sized nonprofit theatres for premieres of promising new plays for children, the establishment of special production projects for children's theatre, and performance expenses of U.S. children's theatres to participate in national or international festivals. The application for both of these programs is April 1, 2009. Application guidelines and forms are available on the Children's Theatre Foundation of America's website, found by clicking the title above.

Jobs

Assistant Director, Conservation Education

National Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

Salary range: 102,721.00-133,543.00

JOB SUMMARY:

Applications for this position are being processed through an on-line applicant assessment system that has been specifically configured for USDA Forest Service applicants. Even if you have already developed a resume in USAJOBS, you will need to access this on-line system to complete the application process. To obtain information about this position and TO APPLY, please click on <http://www.avuecentral.com/vacancy.html?ref=TFCGT>.

Seeking Instructors for Watershed Trainings

Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable will receive bids for training scheduled on May 15-17, 2009 at Pine Mountain Settlement School, KY, followed by an identical training June 1-3, 2009 at the National Mining Academy, Beckley WV. Additional information at: www.easterncoal.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Rebecca Wilson, Chesapeake Bay Steward for Natural Heritage, is looking for some help to protect least tern nesting areas at Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve. There is potential for volunteers to monitor bird activity, develop educational signs and brochures, and educate preserve visitors about least terns and our protection efforts. Please let her know if you or anyone in your organization is interested in assisting with this project by emailing her at rebecca.wilson@dcr.virginia.gov.

Call for Grant Reviewers

The Office on Volunteerism and Community Service is searching for representatives from nonprofits, local/state government agencies, volunteer organizations, community-based or faith-based organizations, and for-profit corporations to review AmeriCorps grant applications. We are seeking a mix of individuals with experience and/or knowledge of national or community service, faith-based and community-based organizations, grant writing, grant review, education, public safety, environment, homeland security, and/or other human needs. **Take advantage of this opportunity to obtain valuable grant reviewing experience while showing your support of community service in Virginia. [Apply now.](#)**

The Wildbunch Refuge in Warsaw is looking for wildlife rehabilitators and educators (training provided), and for people to help repair and clean the buildings (power washers provided). Diana O'Connor, the resident rehabilitator, a senior citizen with artificial knees and shoulders, rehabilitated over 760 animals last year, mostly by herself. The list includes raccoons, opossums, rabbits, bats, raptors, songbirds, waterfowl, and squirrels. Presently she has owls and hawks, but expects lots of babies and injuries in the coming months. Contact Diana at (804) 313-2240, or (804) 450-6331

What a Way to Spend the Summer—Youth Conservation Corps

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia State Parks is now taking applications for the 2009 Youth Conservation Corps program. The two three-week sessions are scheduled as follows; session one: June 21 - July 11, session two: July 19 – Aug 8. The student may only attend one of the sessions. YCC participants assist with an assortment of projects in Virginia State Parks, including wildlife and fisheries habitat improvement, trail and campground construction and restoration, timber and shoreline improvement, and landscape beautification. The YCC is modeled after the federal service program AmeriCorps and the depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps that built the original six Virginia State Parks. Teams of 10 participants will be chosen from current high school students aged 14-17 (participants must be 14 by 1 June 2009) who demonstrate an interest in protecting Virginia's environment. While no prior experience is necessary, participants will work outside, and the service is physically demanding. A positive attitude, an interest in learning, curiosity about interpreting nature, desire to work on outdoor projects and live away from home in our parks for three weeks are also important factors in the selection process. The 2009 YCC sessions will be held at 10-12 State Parks across the Commonwealth. YCC crew members are provided room, board, tee-shirts and work-related equipment, and receive a \$500 stipend at the end of the three weeks.

The work is outdoors and often physically demanding, but the memories and experiences the youth take away last forever. The YCC application deadline for students is 11 April . For more information contact Gaston at 703.583.5497, Fax 703.583.2514 e-mail vspycc@dcr.virginia.gov or visit www.dcr.virginia.gov. You can apply on line at: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/ycc.shtml